For Caledonian Society, January 25, 1962

One would have to be wholly insensitive to be unmoved by your cordiality. I feel, however, that I am somewhat engaged in a masquerade. Though my name is Bruce, I can pretend to no immediate, or even recent, connection with Scotland, other than an atavistic instict that has always made me particularly happy when I had an opportunity to be there.

I have visited Scotland many times; I must confess that most of these occasions were associated with sport. I have fished your rivers, shot at your grouse, blackgame, woodcock, stalked your stags. Those recreations, trifling in kind, but the source of indelible impressions, give me no claim to your consideration.

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My own descent, as regards Scotland, is of distant origin. My ancestor emigrated, about 1650, to the Colony of Virginia, in attendance upon a royal governor. None of his descendants, so far as I am aware, ever returned to settle in his homeland. They became occupied with their own concerns in their new surroundings. Nevertheless, they preserved an almost exaggerated sentimental attachment to Scotland. They tended to marry emigrants, or

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him to converse freely in a dozen languages, to expound the secrets of the stars as subtly as he divined the mysteries of theologies. The battle-axe, the sword, the lance were his obedient weapons; as a cavalier, no horse disputed his mastery.

His dazzling career was the talk of the Courts of Europe; it ended in one of the most minor of them, because of his exaggerated ~~obeisance~~ deference to the conventions of chivalry.

As formidable in the boudoir as in the tilting-ring, Crichton was certain to arouse jealousy. In Mantua, he was set upon one night, probably returning from an amorous tryst, by masked bravos. Having, in numerous combats, killed his opponents, he was himself despatched in a street brawl. He had already finished off one adversary; when he recognized the reigning Prince among his assailants. With customary grace, he kneeled, offering the Prince the hilt of his sword. The miscreant seized it, and ran him through the heart. At the age of twenty-two the prodigy was dead.

I might trespass on your time to refer to another, but earlier, individual, Michael Scot, a Twelfth Century character; translator, mathematician, astrologer,

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